CAMMER GURTON'S FAMOUS HISTORIES

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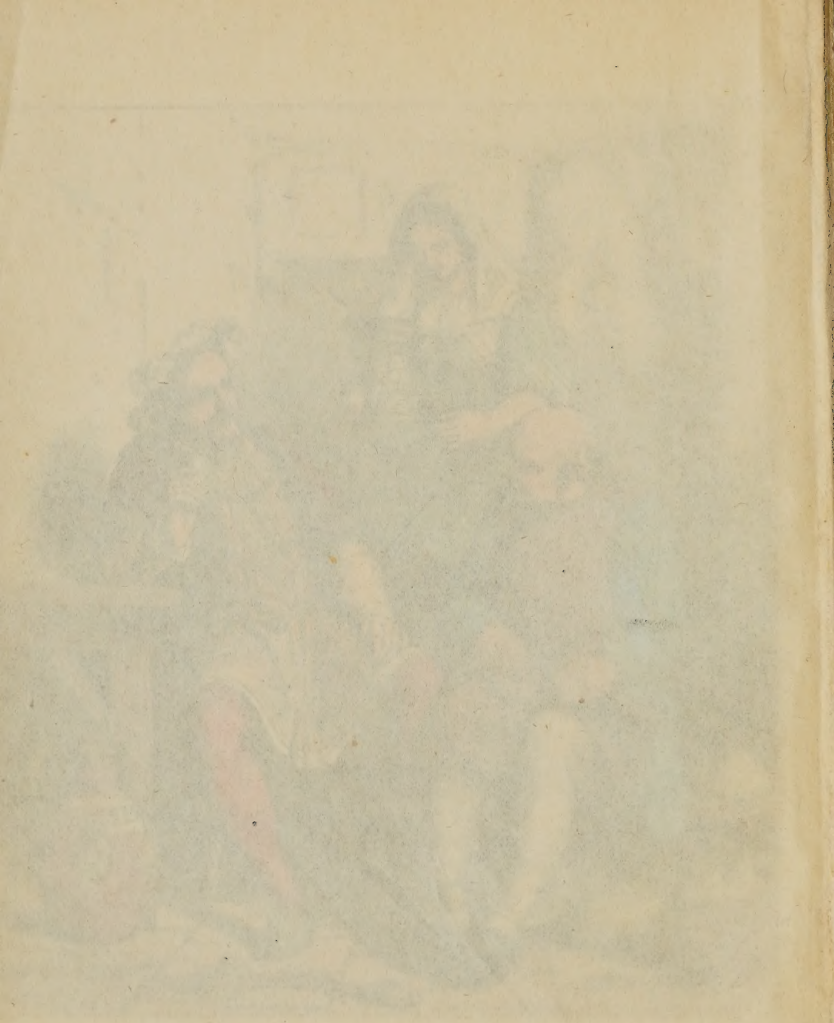
THE KING AND THE COBBLER.

GAMMER GURTON'S

Famous Histories

OF

SIR GUY OF WARWICK, SIR GUY OF HAMPTON,
TOM HICKATHRIFT, FRIAR BACON,
ROBIN HOOD, AND THE KING AND THE COBBLER.



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SIR GUY OF WARWICK, SIR BEVIS OF HAMPTON,
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NEWLY REVISED AND AMENDED

BY AMBROSE MERTON, GENT., F.S.A.

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TO THE READER.

THIS Goodly Little Volume contains Histories, which, in bygone days, delighted the childhood of England's master-spirits. They formed a principal part of the intellectual food of children who, in their generation, became, as men and women, great, and wise, and good.

Their design is to cultivate the heart, to enrich the fancy, to stir up kindly feelings, to encourage a taste for the BEAUTIFUL, and to accomplish this by taking advantage of the youthful longing for amusement.

They have been prepared for the press by one who holds, that

> "*Truth and Good are one:*
> *And Beauty dwells in them and they in her,*
> *With like participation.*"

And who, in that faith, and in all hearty good will and affection, dedicates these world-renowned Stories to

THE PARENTS AND CHILDREN OF
MERRIE ENGLAND.

NAMES OF THE PAINTERS WHO MADE THE PICTURES IN THIS BOOK.

Sir Guy of Warwick . . .	Frederick Tayler.
Sir Bevis of Hampton . . .	Frederick Tayler.
Tom Hickathrift	Frederick Tayler.
Friar Bacon	John Franklin.
Robin Hood	Frederick Tayler.
The King and the Cobbler .	John Absolon.

THE FAMOUS

HISTORY OF GUY EARL OF WARWICK.

WITH AN ILLUSTRATION BY FREDERICK TAYLER.

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GUY EARL OF WARWICK.



THE

FAMOUS HISTORY OF GUY EARL OF WARWICK.

CHAPTER I.

The Praise of Guy Earl of Warwick, and how he fell in Love with Fair Felice.

IN the blessed time when Athelstan wore the crown of the English nation, Sir Guy, Warwick's mirror, and the wonder of all the world, was the chief hero of the age, who in prowess surpassed all his predecessors, and the trump of whose fame so loudly sounded, that Jews, Turks, and Infidels became acquainted with his name.

But as Mars, the God of Battle, was inspired with the beauty of Venus, so our Guy, by no arms conquered, was conquered by love for Felice the Fair; whose beauty and virtue were so inestimable, and

shone with such heavenly lustre, that Helen, the pride of all Greece, might seem as a Black-a-moor compared to her.

Guy resolving not to stand doting at a distance, went to Warwick Castle where Felice dwelt, she being daughter and heiress to Roband Earl of Warwick. The Earl, her father, hearing of Guy's coming, bade him heartily welcome, and prepared to entertain him with a match of hunting, but he to that lent an unwilling ear, and to prevent it feigned himself sick. The Earl, troubled for his friend, sent his own physician to him. The doctor told Guy his disease was dangerous, and without letting blood there was no remedy. Guy replied, "I know my body is distempered; but you want skill to cure the inward inflammation of my heart: Galen's Herbal cannot quote the flower I like for my remedy. There is a flower which if I might but touch would heal me. It is called by a pretty pleasing name, and I think Phælix soundeth something like it." "I know it not," replied the doctor, "nor is there in the Herbal any flower that beareth such a name, as I remember."

So saying he departed, and left Guy to cast his eyes on the heavenly face of his Felice, as she was walking in a garden full of roses and other flowers.

CHAPTER II.

Guy courts Fair Felice; she at first denies, but after grants his Suit on Conditions, which he accepts.

GUY immediately advanced to fair Felice, who was reposing herself in an arbour, and saluted her with bended knees. "All hail, fair Felice, flower of beauty, and jewel of virtue! I know great princes seek to win thy love, whose exquisite perfections might grace the mightiest monarch in the world; yet may they come short of Guy's real affection, in whom love is pictured with naked truth and honesty. Disdain me not for being a steward's son, one of thy father's servants." Felice interrupted him saying, "Cease, bold youth, leave off this passionate address; you are but young and meanly born, and unfit for my degree: I would not my father should know this." With this answer she departed from him.

Guy thus discomfited, lived for some time like one distracted, wringing his hands, resolving to travel through the world to gain the love of Felice, or death to end his misery.

Though Dame Fortune long may frown; when her

course is run, she sends a smile to cure the hearts that have been wounded by her frowns: so Cupid sent from his bow a golden-headed shaft and wounded Felice; and to her sight presented an armed Knight saying, "This Knight shall become so famous in the world that Kings and Princes shall his friendship court." When Felice found herself wounded, she cried, "O pity me, gentle Cupid; solicit for me to thy mother, and I will offer myself up at thy shrine."

Guy little dreaming of this so sudden thaw, and wanting the balm of love to apply to his sores, resolved to make a second encounter. So coming again to his Felice, said, "Fair Lady, I have been arraigned long ago, and now am come to receive my just sentence from the Tribunal of Love. It is life or death, fair Felice, that I look for, let me not languish in despair; give judgment, O ye fair, give judgment, that I may know my doom. A word from thy sacred lips can cure my bleeding heart, or a frown can doom me to the pit of misery."

"Gentle Guy," said she, "I am not at my own disposal; you know my father's name is great in the nation, and I dare not match without his consent."

"Sweet Lady," said Guy, "I make no doubt but quickly to obtain his love and favour. Let me have thy love first, fair Felice, and there is no fear of thy father's wrath preventing us."

"Sir Guy," quoth Felice, "make thy bold achievements and noble actions shine abroad, glorious as the sun, that all opposers may tremble at thy high applauded name, and then thy suit cannot be denied."

"Fair Felice," said Guy, "I ask no more. Oh that I were at work my task to prove with some such churlish man as Hercules!"

CHAPTER III.

Guy wins the Emperor's Daughter from several Princes, and returning to Warwick is sent forth by Felice to seek new Adventures; but before his departure destroys a monstrous Dun Cow upon Dunsmore Heath.

OUR noble Guy, at last disengaged from Love's cruelty, now armed himself like a Knight of Chivalry, and crossing the raging ocean, quickly arrived at the Court of Thrace, where he heard that the Emperor of Almain's fair daughter Blanch was to be made a prize for him that won her in the field; upon which account the Worthies of the World assembled to try their fortunes. The golden trumpets sounded with great joy and triumph, and the stately pampered steeds pranced over the ground, and each He there thought himself a Cæsar that none could equal. Kings

and Princes were there, to behold who should be the conqueror, every one thinking that fair Blanch should be his.

After desperate charging with horse and man, much blood was shed; and our noble Guy laid about him like a lion, among the princes; here lay one headless, another without a leg or an arm, and there a horse. Guy still, like Hercules, charged desperately, and killed a German Prince and his horse under him. Duke Otto, vowing revenge upon our English champion, gave Guy a fresh assault, but his courage was soon cooled. Then Duke Rayner would engage our favourite Knight, but with as little success as the rest; and at length no man would encounter Guy any more: so by his valour he won the Lady, in the field.

The Emperor, being himself a spectator, sent a messenger for our English Knight. Guy immediately came into the Emperor's presence, and made his obeisance, when the Emperor, as a token of his affection, gave him his hand to kiss, and withal resigned to him his daughter, a falcon, and a hound.

Guy thanked his Majesty for his gracious favour; but for fair Felice's sake, left fair Blanch to her father's tuition, and departed from that graceful Court, taking with him only the other tokens of his victory.

Now Guy, beginning to meditate upon his long absence from his fair Felice, and doubting of her

prosperity, or that she might too much forget him, departed for England; and having at last arrived at the long-wished-for haven of his love, thus greeted his beloved mistress: "Fair foe," said he, "I am now come to challenge your promise, the which was, upon my making my name famous by martial deeds, I should be the master of my beloved mistress. Behold, fair Felice, this stately steed, this falcon, and these hounds, part of the prize I have won in the field, before Kings and Princes."

"Worthy Knight," quoth Felice, "I have heard of thy winning the Lady Blanch from Royal Dukes and Princes, and I am glad to find that Guy is so victorious. But thou must seek more adventures, earn yet a nobler name, before I wed thee."

Guy, discomfited at this unlooked-for answer, took leave of fair Felice, clad himself again in Bellona's livery, and set forth on his travels.

While waiting for a fair wind to sail for France, Guy heard of an exceeding great and monstrous Cow, four yards in height and six in length, lurking within the woods not many miles from Warwick, and making there most dreadful devastations. This Cow was of a Dun colour, and from thence named the Dun Cow; and the place where she lay being on the borders of a great Heath, was from thence called Dunsmore Heath, which name it retains to this day.

Guy arming himself with his sword, a strong battle-axe, and his bow and quiver, rode to the place where this monster used to lurk, which was in a thicket of trees, which grew on the side of a heath near a pool of standing water; and being come within a bow-shot of it the monster espied him, and set up a dreadful roaring, enough to fill any heart with terror. Guy, nothing daunted, bent his bow of steel; but his arrow redounded as from an adamantine wall, when the dreadful beast rushed at him like the wind. Guy observing this, lifted up his battle-axe and smote her such a blow as made her recoil. Enraged yet more, she again rushed at him, and clapping her horns upon his breast, dented his armour, though of highest proof. Wheeling his warlike steed about, he gave her a desperate wound under the ear, and following this stroke with others no less forcible, at last he brought her to the ground. Then Guy, alighting from his horse, hewed her so long, till with a horrid groan she breathed her last.

The whole country, when they heard of the monster's death, came to behold the dead carcase, and loaded Guy with thanks and presents; and the King, after a splendid entertainment, gave him the Order of Knighthood.

CHAPTER IV.

Guy, having performed great Wonders abroad, returns to England, and is married to Felice.

GUY now set forth in search of further adventures, and performed many acts of valour. Once after a tedious journey, being seated by a spring to refresh himself, he heard a hideous noise, and presently espied a Lion and a Dragon, fighting, biting, and tearing each other. At length Guy, perceiving the Lion ready to faint, encountered the Dragon, and soon brought the ugly Cerberus roaring and yelling to the ground. The Lion, in gratitude to Guy, run by his horse's side like a true-born spaniel, till lack of food made him retire to his wonted abode.

Soon after Guy met with the Earl of Terry, whose father was confined in his Castle by Duke Otto; but he and that Lord posted thither, and freed the Castle immediately; and Guy in an open field slew Duke Otto, whose dying words of repentance moved Guy to remorse and pity.

After this, as Guy returned through a desert, he met a furious boar that had slain many Christians.

Guy manfully drew his sword, and the boar gaping, intending with his dreadful tusks to devour our noble champion, Guy thrust it down his throat, and slew the greatest boar that ever man beheld.

On Guy's arrival in England, he immediately repaired to King Athelstan at York, where the King told Guy of a mighty Dragon in Northumberland, that destroyed men, women, and children. Guy desired a guide, and went immediately to the Dragon's cave; when out came the monster, with eyes like flaming fire. Guy charged him courageously; but the Monster bit the lance in two like a reed; then Guy drew his sword, and cut such gashes in the Dragon's sides, that the blood and life poured out of his venomous carcase. Then Guy cut off the head of the monster, and presented it to the King, who in the memory of Guy's service, caused the picture of the Dragon, which was thirty feet in length, to be worked in a cloth of arras, and hung up in Warwick Castle for an everlasting monument. Felice, hearing of Guy's return and success, came as far as Lincoln to meet him, where they were married with much joy and great triumph; King Athelstan, his Queen, and all the chief Nobles and Barons of the land, being present.

No sooner were their nuptials celebrated, but Felice's father died, leaving all his estate to Sir Guy, whom the King thereupon created Earl of Warwick.

CHAPTER V.

Guy leaves his Wife, and goes a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

IN the very height of Guy's glory, when he was exalted to his father's dignities, conscience biddeth him repent of all his former sins; so Guy resolved to travel to the Holy Land like a Pilgrim. Felice, perceiving his melancholy, inquired of her Lord the cause of this passion? "Ah, Felice!" said he, "I have spent much time in honouring thee, and to win thy favour; but never spared one minute for my soul's health in honouring the Lord."

Felice, though very much grieved, understanding his determination, opposed not his will. So, with exchange of rings, and melting kisses, he departed, like a stranger from his own habitation, taking with him neither money nor scrip; while but a small quantity of herbs and roots, such only as the wild fields could afford, formed his chief diet; and he vowed never to fight more, but in a just cause.

Guy, after travelling many tedious miles, met an aged person oppressed with grief, for the loss of fifteen

sons, whom Armarant, a mighty Giant, had taken from him, and held in strong captivity.

Guy borrowed the old man's sword, and went directly up to the Castle gate, where the Giant dwelt, who coming to the door, asked grimly, "How he durst so boldly knock at the gates?" vowing he would beat out his brains. But Guy, laughing at him, said, "Sirrah, thou art quarrelsome; but I have a sword that has often hewn such lubbards as you asunder." As he spoke he laid his blade about the Giant's shoulders, so that he bled abundantly; who being much enraged, flung his club at Guy with such force, that he beat him down; and before Guy could recover his fall Armarant had got up his club again. But in the end Guy killed this broad-backed monster, and released divers captives that had been in thraldom a long time; some almost famished, and others ready to expire under various tortures; who returned Guy thanks for their happy deliverance. After which he gave up the Castle and keys to the old man and his fifteen sons; and pursued his intended journey, and coming to a grave, he took up a worm-eaten skull, which he thus addressed: "Perhaps thou wert a Prince, or a mighty Monarch, a King, a Duke, or a Lord! But the King and the Beggar must all return to the earth; and therefore man had need to remember his dying hour. Perhaps thou mightest have been a Queen, or a

Duchess, or a Lady varnished with much beauty; but now thou art wormsmeat, lying in the grave, the sepulchre of all creatures."

While Guy was in this repenting solitude, fair Felice, like a mourning widow, clothed herself in sable attire, and vowed chastity in the absence of her beloved husband. Her whole delight was in divine meditations and heavenly consolations, praying for the welfare of her beloved Lord, whom she feared some savage monster had devoured. Thus Felice spent the remainder of her life in sorrow for her dear Lord; and to shew her humility, she sold her jewels and the costly robes with which she used to grace King Athelstan's Court, and gave the money freely to the poor; she relieved the lame and the blind, the widow and the fatherless, and all those that came to ask alms; and built a large hospital for aged and sick people, that they might be comforted in their sickness. Thus she laid up for herself treasure in heaven, which will be paid again with life everlasting.

In the meantime Guy travelled through many lands, and at last in the course of his journeying he met the Earl of Terry, who had been exiled from his territories by a merciless traitor. Guy bade him not be dismayed, and promised to venture his life for his restoration. The Earl thanked Guy most courteously, and they travelled together against Terry's enemy.

Guy challenged him into the field, and there slew him hand to hand, and restored the Earl to his lands. The Earl full of gratitude begged to know the name of his champion, but Guy insisted upon remaining unknown; neither would he take any reward for his services. Thus was the noble Guy successful in all his actions, until finding his head crowned with silver hairs, after many years' travel, he resolved to end his days in his native country: and therefore returning from the Holy Land, he came to England. On his arrival he found the nation in great distress, the Danes having invaded the land, burning cities and towns, plundering the country, and killing men, women, and children; insomuch that King Athelstan was forced to take refuge in his invincible city of Winchester.

CHAPTER VI.

Guy fights with the Giant Colbran, and having overcome him, discovers himself to the King, then to his Wife, and dies in her arms.

THE Danes, having intelligence of King Athelstan's retreat to Winchester, drew all their forces thither; and seeing there was no way to win the city, they sent

a summons to King Athelstan, desiring that an Englishman might combat with a Dane, and that side to lose the whole whose Champion was defeated. On this mighty Colbran singled himself from the Danes, and entered upon Morn Hill, near Winchester, breathing venomous words, calling the English cowardly dogs, whose carcasses he would make food for ravens. "What mighty boasting," said he, "hath there been in the foreign nations of these English cowards, as if they had done deeds of wonder, who now like foxes hide their heads!"

Guy, hearing proud Colbran, could no longer forbear, but went immediately to the King, and on his knee begged a combat; the King, liking the courage of the pilgrim, bade him go and prosper. Whereupon Guy departed out of the North gate to Morn Hill, where Colbran, the Danish Champion, was. When Colbran espied Guy he disdained him, saying, "Art thou the best Champion England can afford?" Quoth Guy, "It is unbecoming a professed Champion to rail; my sword shall be my orator." No longer they stood to parley, but with great courage fought most manfully; but Guy was so nimble, that in vain Colbran struck; for every blow fell upon the ground. Guy still laid about him like a dragon, which gave great encouragement to the English; until Colbran in the end growing faint, Guy brought the Giant to the ground. Upon

which the English all shouted with so much joy, that the welkin rang again. After this battle the Danes retired back again to their own country.

King Athelstan sent for his Champion to honour him; but Guy refused honours, saying, "My Liege, I am a mortal man, and have set the vain world at defiance." But at the King's earnest request, on promise of concealment, Guy discovered himself to him; which rejoiced Athelstan's heart, and he embraced his worthy Champion. But Guy took leave of his Sovereign, and went to seek a solitary cave, wherein to spend the remainder of his life. From time to time he repaired to Warwick Castle, and received alms at the hands of his dear Lady, who shewed more bounty to pilgrims than any lady in the land besides.

At length finding his hour draw nigh, he sent a messenger to Felice, with a gold ring, at the sight of which token she hastened to her Lord. And Guy soon after died in the arms of his beloved Felice; who, having survived him only fifteen days, was buried in the same grave.

Now is the Story brought to an end of Guy the bold Baron of price, and of the fair maid Felice.

THE GALLANT

HISTORY OF SIR BEVIS OF HAMPTON.

WITH AN ILLUSTRATION BY FREDERICK TAYLER.

CHAPMAN AND HALL, LONDON.



SIR BEVIS OF SOUTHAMPTON.



THE GALLANT HISTORY OF SIR BEVIS OF SOUTHAMPTON.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Birth of Bevis; and of the Death of his Father.

IN the reign of Edgar, King of England, there was a most renowned knight, named Sir Guy, Earl of Southampton; whose deeds exceeded those of all the valiant knights in this kingdom; and who, thirsting after fame, travelled in his youth in search of adventures, and conquered all his opposers with his unmastered strength, and victorious hand.

On his return, King Edgar sent a messenger to invite him to the court, to do him honour, for the valiant deeds he had performed. Whereupon, Sir

Guy, with all speed, rode to the King, by whom he was royally entertained; and after great feasting, the King, according to Sir Guy's great desert, made him High Steward of England.

Sir Guy now determined to take to himself a wife, and the King of Scotland having a fair daughter, Sir Guy made suit unto her; but the Emperor of Almain's brother was a suitor unto her likewise, and she loved Sir Murdure better than she loved Sir Guy: and though her father gave her in marriage to Sir Guy, she still affected Sir Murdure best.

Sir Guy, not knowing her hatred of him, returned with great pomp into England with this deceitful lady; and, after some time, had a son by her, whom they named Bevis. Great was the joy, and great the triumph of Sir Guy, at the birth of his son; his love for his lady waxed greater, for he was confident her heart was more strongly linked to his, with the never-breaking bands of love. But the good knight was much deceived: she continued to love Sir Murdure, and sent a servant, whom she well might trust, to him in Almain, bidding him come to England, with a great company of knights, to slay Sir Guy; which done, she would marry him: and the time he should meet Sir Guy was the First of May. The message being delivered, Sir Murdure was resolved to perform

what she had commanded, and arrived in England by the time appointed.

On the First of May, the lady feigned hersælf sick, and longed to eat of the flesh of a wild boar from the forest. Sir Guy, not dreaming of her treachery, took a steed, girt a sword about him, and with a spear in his hand, rode to the forest. Here he was soon encompassed by Sir Murdure and his companions; and after unhorsing Sir Murdure, and slaying one hundred of his assailants, he was at last overpowered by numbers. When he was slain, Sir Murdure cut off his head, and sent it to his lady, who received it joyfully, and gave the messenger a great reward. This treachery being thus accomplished, Sir Murdure made haste unto the castle of Sir Guy, and there was royally received of Sir Guy's wife.

CHAPTER II.

How Bevis kept Sheep; and how he went to his Father's House and slew the Porter of the gate.

BEVIS, hearing how basely his father was killed, ran to his mother, and vowed if ever he came

to age, that he would be revenged on her, and on the base traitor, Sir Murdure: whereupon his mother gave him a box of the ear, which felled him to the ground. Sir Saber, the brother of Sir Guy, being very sorrowful for the death of his brother, and seeing his nephew so misused, caught him up in his arms, and carried him away; and when his mother privately besought him to murder Bevis, feigned consent. Instead of doing so, he clothed him in mean attire, and sent him to keep his sheep. So Bevis went to the top of a hill, near his father's castle, where his uncle's sheep were.

In the meantime, Sir Saber killed a pig, and dipped the garments of the child in the blood thereof. Poor Bevis, all this while, sate weeping upon the hill. At length, hearing trumpets sounding at his father's castle, for joy that his mother had obtained her desire, he cast off all care of his sheep, and ran, with his shepherd's crook on his shoulder, to the castle. He knocked at the gate, and the porter denying him entrance, Bevis with his crook gave him a blow which felled him to the earth. Then into the hall he went, where Sir Murdure sate at table with his mother, and many knights and ladies; and though all in rags, he shewed what blood ran in his veins, for, with a violent blow, he struck Sir Murdure under the table, and vowed, but that it was

against nature, he would send his mother after his own father. With that all the knights sought to lay hands on Bevis; but he forced his way through the midst of them, and got clear off.

When Bevis returned to his Uncle Saber, and related to him what he had done, Saber was greatly grieved, and said, "Alas, thou hast betrayed us both. Yet, once more will I save thee." He had scarcely said so, when the mother of Bevis (like a woman distracted of her wits) came in great haste to Saber, and reproached him with having disobeyed her orders to put Bevis to death. "Madam," said Saber, "he is dead." She replied, "It is false; and if you do not speedily slay him, it shall cost you your life, as well as his." Bevis hearing this, stept out from the closet, in which Saber had concealed him, and was ready to tear her in pieces; but she escaped, by the assistance of Sir Saber and another knight, whom she straightway ordered to cast Bevis into the sea and drown him: and, to pacify her anger, they promised to do so.

CHAPTER III.

How Bevis was sold to the Saracens, and being carried into their country, was presented unto King Ermyn.

ON their arrival at the sea-shore, Sir Saber and the knight sold Bevis to some Saracen merchants, whom they there met with. The merchants on their arrival in their own country, presented Bevis to their King Ermyn, who swore by Mahound he had never seen such a sweet-faced boy in all his life.

Then the King asked him, where he was born? "In England," replied Bevis. "Whose son wast thou there?" said the King. And when he told him, "I am the son of Sir Guy, of Southampton," Ermyn said, "I have heard much talk of thy father. He was, by report, as valiant a knight as ever yet drew sword. I have but one fair daughter," continued Ermyn, "and if thou wilt renounce Christianity, and worship Apoline, thou shalt have my daughter to wife, and enjoy my kingdom after me." Bevis rejected this offer: whereupon Ermyn said:

Whiles that thou art but a swain,
Thou shalt be my chamberlain;
But when thou art dubbed a knight,
My banner shalt thou bear in fight.

Bevis gratefully accepted this offer, and continued during seven years to make a progress in the affections of the Saracen monarch, as well as in those of his daughter, the beautiful Josyan.

At the end of that time, it chanced that on Christmas-day, Bevis rode into the fields to recreate himself, and meeting threescore Saracen knights, one of them asked him, if he was aware what day it was? On his replying, that he did not know, the Saracen told him, that it was the Festival of the Nativity; and that they were all scandalized at the manner in which he was dishonouring it.

"Were I as well armed as my father," said Bevis, "you should know that I honour this day more than ever you honoured your idol Apoline."

The Saracen knights, incensed at this speech, determined to punish Bevis; and being all armed with swords, wounded him very severely, before he had the means of making any defence. But at length, Bevis having wrested a sword from the hands of one of the Saracens, slew the whole of them, and sent their steeds home without the riders.

Ermyn, on hearing how disdainfully Bevis had spoken against Apoline, and how he had slain threescore of his knights, ordered his immediate execution; but being prevailed upon, by Josyan, to hear what Bevis had to say in his defence, was so moved by the effect of his eloquence, or rather of his pallid countenance and numberless wounds, that he burst into tears, and not only forgave Bevis, but commanded Josyan to exert all her leechcraft in his behalf. This she did so effectually, that he was soon

> As fierce and ready for to fight
> As is the falcon to the flight.

CHAPTER IV.

How Bevis, after slaying a mighty wild Boar, is made a Knight, and Captain of Twenty Thousand Men to go against Bradmond.

SHORTLY after this, Bevis succeeded in destroying a mighty wild boar, which had long ravaged the country, destroying man, woman, and child. And about this time, Bradmond, King of Damascus,

sent ambassadors to Ermyn, demanding to have fair Josyan to his wife; and threatening, in the event of his being refused, that he would waste with fire and sword the whole territory of Ermyn.

Upon this, Ermyn assembled all his lords and barons together, to take counsel what to do. Some said it was better he should let Josyan go, than hazard the loss of his crown and kingdom. But Josyan said to her father, "If thou wilt make Bevis general over a host of men, he will conquer your foes." This advice pleased Ermyn, and sending for Bevis, he dubbed him a knight, and placed twenty thousand men under his command.

Then Josyan fitted on his armour, gave him a trusty sword called Morglay, and a steed called Arundel; and Bevis being mounted, Josyan viewed him well, and smiled at him, and Bevis smiled at her again; and then saluting her, away he rode with all his host, against Bradmond and all his host.

Bevis, having obtained a glorious victory over Bradmond, destroyed his army, and taken the King himself, and two of his knights, prisoners, returned to Ermyn, by whom he was royally entertained.

Ermyn, to show his gratitude, commanded his fair daughter, Josyan, to disarm Sir Bevis, to clothe him in a magnificent robe, and to serve him at table. The Princess, who was enamoured of Sir Bevis, not

only readily obeyed her father's injunctions, but took the opportunity of avowing her affection to him; and on his declaring that he would never wed an idolater, expressed her willingness to forsake her gods and become a Christian for his sake.

At these words Sir Bevis' heart began to melt, and taking her to his arms, he kissed her, and acknowledged how long he had admired her; an acknowledgment which he had determined never to make while she remained a worshipper of Apoline.

In the meanwhile, the two knights, whom Bevis had taken prisoners, hearing what had passed between Bevis and Josyan, discovered all to the King; who, being enraged, wrote a letter to Bradmond, enjoining him to put the bearer of it to death; and this letter he charged Bevis to convey to that King.

CHAPTER V.

What befell Bevis on his Journey, and how Josyan inquired of her Father what had become of Sir Bevis.

WHEN Bevis arrived at the capital of King Bradmond, his anger being aroused at seeing the inhabitants sacrificing to Mahound, he pulled down the idol, and trampled it in the dust. The Saracens, enraged at this conduct, attacked Bevis, who, although he had not his own sword, Morglay, slew two hundred of them in that bout. Then riding forward to the palace of King Bradmond, he delivered the letter to him; which he had no sooner read, than he commanded Bevis to be cast into a dungeon, to be devoured by two fierce dragons. By good fortune, his hands had been left untied; and having found in the dungeon the truncheon of a spear, he soon destroyed the dragons, and so he was at rest for a time.

In the meanwhile, Josyan inquiring of her father what had become of Sir Bevis, he told her that he had returned to his own country; and King Inor coming to woo and wed Josyan, Ermyn gave him

Morglay and Arundel, which added to the great grief of Josyan.

All this time Bevis lay in prison; and at the end of seven years, during which he had been fed upon nothing but bran and water, his keepers thinking he must be wondrous feeble, entered his dungeon to slay him, but he was so strong that he killed them both; and, it being night time, he escaped out of the dungeon, and mounting a steed rode away.

Being pursued by vast bodies of the Saracens, and amongst others by a formidable knight, Sir Graundere, mounted on a valuable horse, named Trenchefys, Bevis, when overtaken by him, being compelled to defend himself, turned upon his adversary, pierced him through the heart, took possession of Trenchefys, and continued his flight. On arriving at a river, hotly pursued by his enemies, he plunged in, and reached in safety the opposite shore. When he came to land, being ready to faint with hunger, he rode up to a castle inhabited by a Giant, who was brother to Sir Graundere. The Giant, recognising the horse, demanded of Bevis how he became possessed of it. "By serving thy brother as I intend to serve thee," was his reply. Upon this the Giant struck at him with a mighty bar of iron; the blow missed Bevis, but beat out the brains of Trenchefys; while Bevis, leaping out of the saddle, made a full

blow at the Giant, which parted his head from his body.

After refreshing himself at the castle, and taking a steed from the stable, Sir Bevis rode away from thence, to find out fair Josyan, whom he dearly loved. On his way he met a palmer, and inquiring of him who dwelt in yonder castle, "Marry," quoth the palmer, "there dwelleth King Inor, who married the Lady Josyan." Upon hearing this, Bevis exchanged his horse for the palmer's suit, and took his way to the castle, where he found abundance of joys more than he looked for.

At first, Josyan did not know him, but, when having given him leave to see Arundel, and Arundel broke seven chains on hearing him speak, she recognised him, she took him aside into her garden, where, after awhile, they determined to escape together.

This they soon did; and as they rode onward on their journey, there met them Ascapart, an ugly giant, who was thirty feet in length, and bristled like a swine. Ascapart commanded Bevis and Josyan to follow him. "Not so," said Bevis; so Josyan held Arundel whilst he fought with Ascapart.

The fight continued a long time; till, at length the Giant falling, Bevis would have struck off his head, but Josyan being pitiful, said, "Do not so;

let him go with us." "Lady," said Bevis, "he may betray us." "By Mahound," said Ascapart, "if thou wilt save my life, I will be true to thee." "Then rise, and live," said Bevis. So Bevis and Josyan mounted Arundel, and away they rode, with Ascapart by their side, till they came to the sea, where they found many Saracens, and a ship bound for Christendom.

Now the Saracens would not ferry them to the ship, so Bevis and Ascapart attacked and made great slaughter among them. Then, said Ascapart, "Let me alone; I will carry you to the ship, horse and all." So he took the horse under his arm, with Bevis and Josyan, and waded with them to the ship.

They were welcomed on board; and so sailed to Cologne, where dwelled a Bishop who was kinsman to Bevis, and inquiring of him "What country lady is this?" Bevis answered, "King Ermyn's daughter, who would become a Christian for my sake." "And what ill-favoured lubber is this?" said the Bishop. "He is my page," quoth Bevis; "and Josyan and he would fain be christened." "The lubber is too big to be carried to the font," said the Bishop. "That is true," said Sir Bevis. But in the end, Josyan was christened by the Bishop, and Ascapart had a font made on purpose to be

christened in; but when the ceremony was being performed, he cried out, "Thou wilt drown me; I am too big to be christened by thee;" and leapt over the font and went away.

CHAPTER VI.

How Bevis raised an Army against Murdure, vanquished him, and married Josyan.

NOW Bevis being anxious to recover his inheritance, got a hundred valiant soldiers from his uncle, and sailed for England, and landed near Southampton; and calling himself Sir Gerard, proffered his services to Sir Murdure, to assist him against Sir Saber, on condition of his supplying them with horse and arms. "Ay! and of the best too," said Sir Murdure; "for every man shall choose his own steed and arms." Accordingly Sir Bevis and his men were furnished with all things fitting for service; and then, ships being prepared for the purpose, they sailed for the Isle of Wight, where Sir Saber dwelt.

On his arrival in that island, Bevis sent to Sir

Murdure, to thank him for his arms, and bid him prepare for battle.

So Sir Murdure and his host came to the Isle of Wight, and gave battle to Sir Saber, Bevis, and Ascapart; who, however, made such havoc among them, that they slew all that came near them.

Ascapart took Sir Murdure, and, carrying him to a stronghold, cast him into a cauldron of boiling pitch and brimstone; and his wife, hearing of this, threw herself from the walls of her castle, and broke her neck.

Then Sir Bevis despatched a messenger to the Bishop of Cologne, who joyfully obeyed the summons,

> And wedded Bevis and Josyan,
> To the great joy of every man.
> Right great feasts there did they hold,
> Of dukes, earls, barons, and knights bold,
> Of ladies and maidens, understand,
> The fairest that were in the land.
> Thus endeth Sir Bevis of Hampton,
> That was so bold and brave a baron.

THE

EXCELLENT HISTORY OF TOM HICKATHRIFT

THE CONQUEROR.

WITH AN ILLUSTRATION BY FREDERICK TAYLER.

CHAPMAN AND HALL, LONDON.



TOM HICKATHRIFT.

THE EXCELLENT HISTORY OF TOM HICKATHRIFT THE CONQUEROR.

CHAPTER I.

Tom's Birth and Parentage.

IN the reign of William the Conqueror, there lived in the Isle of Ely, in Cambridgeshire, a man named Thomas Hickathrift, a poor labourer, yet an honest stout man, and able to do as much work in a day, as two ordinary men, who, having only one son, called him after his own name, Thomas.

It pleased God to call the old man aside, and his mother being tender of their son, maintained him by her own labour as well as she could; but all his delight was in the corner; and he ate as much at once, as would serve six ordinary men.

At ten years old he was six feet high, and three in thickness; his hand was like a shoulder of mutton, and every other part proportionate; but his great strength was yet unknown.

CHAPTER II.

How Tom Hickathrift's great Strength came to be known.

TOM'S mother being a poor widow, went to a rich farmer's house to beg a bundle of straw, to shift herself and her son Thomas. The farmer being an honest charitable man, bade her take what she wanted. She going home to her son Thomas, said, "Pray go to such a place and fetch me a bundle of straw, I have asked leave." He swore he would not go. "Nay, prithee go," said his poor old mother. Again he swore he would not go, unless she would borrow him a cart-rope. She, being willing to please him, went and borrowed one.

Then taking up the cart-rope, away went Tom, and coming to the farmer's house, found him in the barn, and two men thrashing. Said he, "I am come for a bundle of straw." "Tom," said the farmer, "take as much as thou canst carry." So he laid down his cart-rope, and began to make up his bundle.

"Your rope, Tom," said they, "is too short;" and jeered him. But he fitted the farmer well for his joke, and when he had made up his burden, it was supposed to be near a thousand weight. But though they said, "What a fool thou art; for thou canst not carry the tithe or tenth part of it," he took up his burden, and made no more of it, than we do of a hundred pounds weight, to the great astonishment of both master and men.

Now Tom's strength beginning to be known in the town, they would not let him lie basking in the chimney-

corner; every one hiring him to work, seeing he had so much strength, and telling him it was a shame to lie idle, as he did, from day to day; so that Tom, finding them bait at him as they did, went first to one work and then to another.

One day a man came to him, desiring him to bring a tree home. So Tom went with him, and four other men; and, when they came to the wood, they set the cart by the tree, and began to draw it in by pulleys; but Tom seeing them not able to stir it, said, "Stand aside, fools," and so setting it up on one end, put it into the cart. "There," said he, "see what a man do!" "Marry," said they, "that is true, indeed."

Having done, and coming through the wood, they met the woodman, and Tom asked him for a stick, to make his mother a fire with.

"Ay," says the woodman, "take one."

So Tom took up one, bigger than that on the cart, and putting it on his shoulder, walked home with it, faster than the six horses in the cart drew the other.

This was the second instance of Tom's showing his strength, by which it began to be known that he had more natural strength than twenty common men; and from this time Tom began to grow very tractable; he would jump, run, and delight in young company, and would ride to fairs, and meetings, to see sports and diversions.

One day going to a wake, where the young men were met, some wrestling and some cudgel playing, and some throwing the hammer, Tom stood awhile to see the sport. At last he joined the company throwing the hammer;

and taking the hammer in his hand to feel the weight of it, bade them stand out of the way, for he would try how far he could throw it.

"Ay," says the old smith, "you will throw it a great way, I warrant you." Tom took the hammer, and giving it a swing, threw it into the river, four or five furlongs distance, and bade the smith fetch it out.

After this he joined the wrestlers, and though he had no skill, yet by main strength he flung all he grappled with. So that, at last, none durst enter the ring to wrestle with him.

CHAPTER III.

Tom becomes a Brewer's Servant: Kills a Giant, and so gains the title of Mister Hickathrift.

TOM'S fame being spread, no one durst give him an angry word. At last, a brewer at Lynn, who wanted a lusty man to carry beer to the Marsh and to Wisbeach, hearing of him, came to hire him; but he would not be hired, till his friends persuaded him, and his master promised him a new suit of clothes from top to toe, and that he should eat and drink of the best. At last, Tom consented to be his man, and the master showed him which way he was to go; for there was a monstrous Giant kept part of the Marsh, and none dared to go that way, for if the Giant found them, he would either kill, or make them his servants.

But to come to Tom and his master.—Tom did more in

one day than all the rest of his men did in three; so that his master, seeing him so tractable and careful in his business, made him his head man, and trusted him to carry beer by himself, for he needed none to help him. Thus he went each day to Wisbeach, a journey of near twenty miles.

But going this journey so often, and finding the other road that the Giant kept was nearer by the half, Tom having increased his strength by good living, and improved his courage by drinking so much strong ale, resolved one day, as he was going to Wisbeach, without saying anything to his master, or to his fellow-servants, to take the nearest read or lose his life; to win the horse or lose the saddle; to kill, or be killed, if he met with the Giant.

Thus resolved, he goes the nearest way with his cart, flinging open the gates in order to go through; but the Giant soon espied him, and seeing him a daring fellow, vowed to stop his journey, and make a prize of his beer: but Tom cared not a fig for him; and the Giant met him like a roaring lion, as though he would swallow him up.

"Sirrah," said he, "who gave you authority to come this way? Do you not know, that I make all stand in fear of me? And you, like an impudent rogue, must come, and fling open my gate at pleasure. Are you so careless of your life, that you do not care what you do? I will make you an example to all rogues under the sun. Dost thou not see how many heads of those that have offended my laws, hang upon yonder tree? Thine shall hang above them all."

"None of your prating," said Tom, "you shall not find me like them." "No," said the Giant. "Why you are

but a fool if you come to fight me, and bring no weapon to defend thyself." Cries Tom, "I have got a weapon here, shall make you know I am your master." "Say you so, sirrah?" said the Giant; and then ran to his cave to fetch his club, intending to dash his brains out at a blow.

While the Giant was gone for his club, Tom turned his cart upside down, and took the axle-tree and wheel, for his sword and buckler; and excellent weapons they were, on such an emergency.

The Giant, coming out again, began to stare at Tom, to see him take the wheel in one of his hands, and the axle-tree in the other. "Oh! oh!" said the Giant, "you are like to do great things with those instruments; I have a twig here that will beat thee, thy axle-tree, and wheel, to the ground."

Now, that which the Giant called a twig, was as thick as a mill-post, and with this, the Giant made a blow at him, with such force, as made his wheel crack. Tom, nothing daunted, gave him as brave a blow on the side of the head, which made him reel again. "What!" said Tom, "have you got drunk with my small beer already?" But the Giant recovering, made many hard blows at him, which Tom kept off with his wheel; so that he received but very little hurt.

In the meantime, Tom plied the Giant so well with blows, that the sweat and blood ran together down his face; who being almost spent with fighting so long, begged Tom to let him drink, and then he would fight him again.

"No, no," said he, "my mother did not teach me such wit;" and finding the Giant grow weak, he redoubled his blows till he brought him to the ground.

The Giant, finding himself overcome, roared hideously, and begged Tom to spare his life, and he would perform anything he should desire; even yield himself unto him, and be his servant.

But Tom, having no more mercy on him, than a bear upon a dog, laid on him till he found him breathless, and then cut off his head; after which, he went into his cave, and there found great store of gold and silver, which made his heart leap for joy.

When he had rummaged the cave, and refreshed himself a little, he restored the wheel and axle-tree to their places, and loaded his beer on the cart and went to Wisbeach; where he delivered his beer, and returned home the same night, and told his master what he had done; who next morning went with him to the place, to be convinced of the truth, as did most of the inhabitants of Lynn.

News was soon spread, that Tom had killed the Giant, and happy was he, that could come to see the Giant's cave; and bonfires were made all round the country for Tom's success.

Tom, by the general consent of the country, took possession of the Giant's cave and riches. He pulled down the cave, and built himself a handsome house on the spot. He gave part of the Giant's lands to the poor, for their common, and the rest he divided and enclosed, for an estate to maintain him, and his mother.

Now his fame was spread more and more, through the country, and he was no longer called plain Tom, but Mister Hickathrift: and the people feared his anger now, almost as much as they had done that of the Giant before.

Tom, now finding himself very rich, resolved that his neighbours should be the better for it; he, therefore, enclosed a park, and kept deer; and just by his house, he built a Church, which he dedicated to St. James, because on that Saint's day he killed the Giant.

CHAPTER IV.

Tom meets with a Tinker, and of the Battle they fought.

SOME time after this, as Tom was walking about his estate, to see how his workmen went on, he met upon the skirts of the forest a very sturdy Tinker, having a good staff on his shoulder, and a great dog to carry his budget of tools.

So he asked the Tinker, from whence he came, and whither he was going; as that was no highway. Now, the Tinker being a sturdy fellow, bid him go look; what was that to him? But fools must be always meddling. "Hold," said Tom, "before you and I part, I will make you know who I am."

"Ay," said the Tinker, "it is three years since I had a combat with any man. I have challenged many a one, but none dare face me, so I think they are all cowards in

this part of the country; but I hear there is a man lives hereabouts, named Thomas Hickathrift, who has killed a Giant, him I'd willingly have a bout with."

"Ay," said Tom, "I am the man: what have you to say to me?" "Truly," said the Tinker, "I am glad we are so happily met, that we may have one touch." "Surely," said Tom, "you are but in jest." "Marry," said the Tinker, "but I am in earnest." "A match," said Tom. "It is done," said the Tinker. "But," said Tom, "will you give me leave to get a twig?" "Ay," said the Tinker, "I hate him, that fights with a man unarmed."

So Tom stepped to the gate, and took a rail for a staff, and to it they fell; the Tinker at Tom, and Tom at the Tinker, like two giants. The Tinker had a leather coat on, so that every blow Tom gave him, made it twang again; yet the Tinker did not give way an inch, till Tom gave him a bang on the side of the head, that felled him to the ground.

"Now, Tinker, where art thou?" said Tom. But the Tinker, being a nimble fellow, leaped up again, and gave Tom a bang which made him reel, and following his blows, took Tom on the other side, which made Tom throw down his weapon, and yield the mastery to the brave Tinker. After this Tom took the Tinker home to his house, where they improved their acquaintance, as they got themselves cured of the bruises, they gave each other.

CHAPTER V.

Tom Hickathrift and the Tinker conquer Ten Thousand Rebels; and how they were sent for to Court, and of their kind Entertainment.

IN and about the Isle of Ely, many disaffected persons, to the number of ten thousand, or upwards, drew themselves together in a body, pretending to contend for their rights and privileges, which they said had been greatly infringed; insomuch that the civil magistrates of the county thought themselves in great danger of their lives.

Whereupon the sheriff, came by night, to the house of Mr. Thomas Hickathrift, and told to him the unreasonableness of the complaints of these rebels, and begged his protection and assistance.

"Sheriff," said he, "what service my brother (meaning the Tinker), and I can perform, shall not be wanting."

This said, in the morning by break of day, with trusty clubs, they both went out, desiring the sheriff to be their guide, to the place where the rebels were.

When they came there, Tom and the Tinker marched boldly up to the head of them, and demanded the reason why they disturbed the government? At which they replied, that their will was their law, and by that they would be governed.

"Nay," said Tom, "if it be so, these are our weapons, and by them you shall be chastised." These words were no sooner out of his mouth, but the Tinker and he threw

themselves both together into the crowd, where with their clubs they beat down all before them. Nay, the Tinker struck a tall man upon the neck with such great force that his head flew off, and was carried ten yards from him ; and struck the chief leader, with such violence, that it levelled him to the ground.

Tom, on the other hand, pressing forward beat down all before him, making great havock, till by an unlucky blow, he broke his club; yet he was not in the least dismayed, for he presently seized a stout raw-boned miller, and so made use of him for a weapon, till, at last, he and the Tinker cleared the field.

The King, being truly informed of the faithful services performed by these his loving subjects, Tom Hickathrift and the Tinker, was pleased to send for them, unto a royal banquet, prepared for them and the nobility.

And after the banquet, the King said, "These are my trusty and well-beloved subjects, men of known courage and valour, who conquered ten thousand persons, that were met together to disturb the peace of my realm. As a proof of my favour, kneel down, and receive the order of knighthood, Mr. Hickathrift ; and as for Henry Nonsuch, I will settle upon him forty pounds a-year, during his life."

So said, the King withdrew ; and Sir Thomas Hickathrift, and Henry Nonsuch, the Tinker, returned to their home. But to the great grief of Sir Thomas Hickathrift, he found his mother dead, and buried.

CHAPTER VI.

Tom after the Death of his Mother goes a wooing. His Marriage. Sir Thomas and his Lady are sent for up to Court.

TOM'S mother being dead, and he left alone in a spacious house, he found himself strange; therefore he began to consider with himself, that it would not be amiss to seek a wife; so hearing of a rich and young widow in Cambridge, he goes to her and makes his addresses; and at the first coming, she received him with joy and satisfaction, well knowing that it was safe for a woman to marry with a man, who was able to defend her against any assault whatever, and so brave a man as Tom was found to be.

The day of marriage being appointed, and friends and relations invited, Tom made a plentiful feast; to which he invited all the poor widows in the parish, for the sake of his mother, who had been lately buried.

The tidings of Tom's wedding soon reached the court, and they had a royal invitation there, in order that the King might have a sight of the new-married lady. Accordingly they came, and were received with much joy and triumph.

Whilst they were in the midst of their mirth, news was brought to the King, by the commons of Kent, that a very dreadful Giant was landed on one of the islands, and had brought with him a great number of bears, and

also young lions, with a dreadful dragon, upon which he always rode; which said monster, and ravenous beasts, had much frightened all the inhabitants of the island. And, moreover, they said, if speedy course was not taken to suppress them, they would destroy the country.

The King, hearing of this relation, was a little startled, yet he persuaded them to return home, and make the best defence they could, for the present; assuring them that he would not forget them, and so they parted.

CHAPTER VII.

Tom is made Governor of East Anglia, now called Thanet; and of the wonderful Achievements, he there performed.

THE King hearing these dreadful tidings, immediately sate in council, to consider what was best to be done.

At length, Tom Hickathrift was pitched upon, as being a bold stout subject: for which reason it was judged necessary to make him Governor of that Island; which place of trust he readily accepted, and accordingly went down with his wife and family to take possession of the same, attended by an hundred and odd knights and gentlemen, at least.

Sir Thomas had not been there many days, when looking out of his own window, he espied this Giant mounted on a dreadful dragon, and on his shoulder he bore a club of iron; he had but one eye, which was in

the middle of his forehead, and was as large as a barber's basin, and seemed like flaming fire; the hair of his head hung down like snakes, and his beard like rusty wire.

Lifting up his eyes, he saw Sir Thomas, who was viewing him, from one of the windows of the castle. The Giant then began to knit his brow, and to breathe out some threatening word to the governor, who indeed, was a little surprised at the approach of such a monstrous and ill-favoured brute.

The Giant finding that Tom did not make much haste to get down to him, he alighted from his dragon, and chained him to an oak-tree: then marched to the castle, setting his broad shoulders against the corner of the wall, as if he intended to overthrow the whole bulk of the building at once. Tom perceiving it, said, "Is this the game you would be at; faith, I will spoil your sport, for I have a delicate tool to pick your tooth with." Then taking the two-handed sword, which the King gave him, and flinging open the gate, he there found the Giant, who, by an unfortunate slip in his thrusting, was fallen all along, and lay, not able to help himself.

"How now," said Tom, "do you come here to take up your lodging?" and with that, he ran his long sword between the Giant's shoulders, which made the brute groan, as loud as thunder.

Then Sir Thomas pulled out his sword again, and at six or seven blows smote off his head; and then turning to the dragon, which was all this while chained to the tree, without any further words, but with four or five blows, cut off the head of that also.

This adventure being over, he sent for a waggon and horses, and loaded them with the heads of the Giant and the dragon; and summoning all the constables of the country for a safe-guard, then sent them to court, with a promise to his Majesty that in a short time he would clear the Island of all the bears, lions, and other ravenous beasts.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Tinker hearing of Tom's fame goes to be his partner; and of his being unfortunately slain by a Lion.

TOM'S victories rang so loud, that they reached the ears of his old acquaintance the Tinker, who being very desirous of honour, resolved to go down, and visit him in his government; and coming there, was kindly entertained.

After a few days' pleasure, Tom told him he must go in search of some bears and lions in the Island. "Well," said the Tinker, "I'll go with you." "With all my heart," said Tom, "for I must own I shall be glad of your company." On this, they went forward, Tom with his Giant's iron club, and the Tinker with his pikestaff.

After they had travelled four or five hours, it was their fortune to meet with all the wild beasts together, being in number fourteen; six of which were bears, the other eight young lions. When these creatures had set their eyes on them, they ran furiously, as if they would

have devoured them at a mouthful; but Tom and the Tinker stood side by side, with their backs against an oak, until the lions and bears came within their reach; Tom with his club so belaboured their heads, that they were all destroyed, except one young lion, who seeing the rest of his fellow-creatures dead, was making his escape; but the Tinker being too venturous, ran hastily after him, and gave the lion a blow. The beast turned upon him, and seized him with such violence by the throat, that it ended his life. Tom's joy was now mingled with sorrow, for though he had cleared the Island of these venomous beasts, his grief was intolerable for the loss of his friend.

He returned home to his lady, who in token of joy, for the success he had made in his dangerous enterprises, made a very noble and splendid feast; to which she invited all his friends and acquaintances, and then Tom made them the following promise:

My friends, while I have strength to stand,
  Most manfully I will pursue
All dangers, till I clear the land
  Of lions, bears, and tigers too.

THE

FAMOUS HISTORY OF FRIAR BACON.

WITH AN ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN FRANKLIN.

CHAPMAN AND HALL, LONDON.



FRIAR BACON.

THE FAMOUS HISTORY OF FRIAR BACON.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Parents and Birth of Friar Bacon, and how he addicted himself to learning.

IN most men's opinions he was born in the west part of England; and was son to a wealthy farmer, who put him to school to the parson of the town where he was born: not with the intent that he should turn friar (as he did), but to get so much understanding, that he might manage the better the wealth he was to leave him. But, young Bacon took his learning so fast, that the priest could not teach him any more; which made him desire his master that he would speak to his father to put him to Oxford, that he might not lose that little learning that he had gained. His master was very willing so to do; and, one day meeting his father, told him, that he had received a great blessing of God, in that he had given him so wise and hopeful a child, as his son Roger Bacon was (for so was he named); and wished him, withal, to do his duty, and to bring up so his child that he might shew his thankfulness to God, by making of him a scholar; for he

found, by his sudden taking of his learning, that he was a child likely to prove a very great clerk.

Hereat, old Bacon was not well pleased, for he desired to bring him up to the plough and to the cart; yet he, for reverence' sake to the priest, shewed not his anger, but kindly thanked him for his counsel; yet desired him not to speak any more concerning that matter, for he knew best what pleased himself, and that he would do: and so broke they off their talk and parted.

Young Bacon thought this hard dealing, so within six or eight days he gave his father the slip, and went to a cloister, some twenty miles off, where he was entertained, and so continued his learning; and in small time came to be so famous, that he was sent for to the University of Oxford, where he long time studied, and grew so excellent in the secrets of art and nature, that not England only, but all Christendom, admired him.

CHAPTER II.

How the King sent for Friar Bacon, and of the wonderful Things he shewed the King and Queen.

THE King being in Oxfordshire, at a nobleman's house, was very desirous to see this famous Friar, for he had heard many times of the wondrous things that he had done by his art. Therefore, he sent one for him, to desire him to come to the court. Friar Bacon kindly thanked the King by the messenger, and said, "that he was at the King's service, and would

suddenly attend him: but, Sir," saith he to the gentleman, "I pray you make haste, or else I shall be two hours before you at the court."

"For all your learning," answered the gentleman, "I can hardly believe this, for scholars, old men, and travellers, may lie by authority." However, Friar Bacon by his art was with the King before he came.

The King kindly welcomed him, and said that he long time had desired to see him; for he had as yet not heard of his life. Friar Bacon answered him, "that fame had belied him, and given him that report that his poor studies had never deserved; for he believed that art had many sons more excellent than himself was." The King commended him for his modesty; and told him, that nothing could become a wise man less than boasting; but yet, withal, he requested him now to be no niggard of his knowledge, but to shew his Queen and him some of his skill.

"I were worthy of neither Art nor Knowledge," quoth Friar Bacon, "should I deny your Majesty this small request: I pray seat yourselves, and you shall see presently what my poor skill can perform."

The King, Queen, and nobles having sate them all down, the Friar waved his wand, and presently was heard such excellent music, that they were all amazed, for they all said they had never heard the like. "This is," said the Friar, "to delight the sense of hearing: I will delight all your other senses ere you depart hence."

So waving his wand again, there was louder music

heard; and, presently, five dancers entered, the first, like a court laundress; the second, like a footman; the third, like a usurer; the fourth, like a prodigal; the fifth, like a fool: these did divers excellent changes, so that they gave content to all the beholders; and having done their dance, they all vanished away. Thus feasted he two of their senses. Then waved he his wand again; and there was another kind of music heard; and, whilst it was playing, there was suddenly before them a table, richly covered with all sorts of delicacies. Then desired he the King and Queen to taste of some certain rare fruits that were on the table; which they, and the nobles there present, did, and were very highly pleased with the taste. They being satisfied, all vanished away on the sudden.

Then waved he his wand again; and, suddenly, there was such a smell, as if all the rich perfumes of the whole world had been there. Whilst he feasted, thus, their smelling, he waved his wand again, and there came divers nations in sundry habits (as Russians, Polanders, Indians, Armenians), all bringing sundry kinds of furs, such as their countries yielded, all which they presented to the King and Queen: these furs were so soft to the touch, that they highly pleased all those that handled them; then, after some odd fantastic dances (after their country manner), they vanished away.

Then asked Friar Bacon, the King's Majesty, if that he desired any more of his skill? The King answered, "That he was fully satisfied for that time; and that he only now thought of something that he might bestow on

him, that might partly satisfy the kindness that he had received." Friar Bacon said, "that he desired nothing so much as his Majesty's love; and if that he might be assured of that, he would think himself happy in it." "For that," said the King, "be thou ever sure of it; in token of which, receive this jewel:" and, withal, gave him a costly jewel from his neck. The Friar did with great reverence thank his Majesty; and said, "As your Majesty's vassal, you shall ever find me ready to do you service; your time of need shall find it both beneficial and delightful."

CHAPTER III.

How Friar Bacon deceived his Man, that would fast for his conscience sake.

FRIAR BACON had one only man to attend on him; and he, too, was none of the wisest, for he kept him in charity, more than for any service he had of him. This man of his (named Miles) never could endure to fast as other religious persons did; for always he had, in one corner or another, flesh, which he would eat when his master ate bread only, or else did fast and abstain from all things. Friar Bacon, seeing this, thought, at one time or other, to be even with him; which he did one Friday in this manner.

Miles, on the Thursday night, had provided a great black pudding for his Friday's fast: this pudding put he in his pocket (thinking, belike, to heat it so, for his master had no fire in those days). On the next

day, who was so demure as Miles; he looked as though he would not have eaten anything. When his master offered him some bread, he refused it saying, "His sins deserved a greater penance than one day's fast in a whole week." His master commended him for it; and bade him take heed that he did not dissemble; for, if he did, it would at last be known. "Then were I worse than a Turk," said Miles: and so went he forth, as if he would have gone to pray privately, but it was for nothing but to prey upon his black pudding. That pulled he out, (for it was half roasted with the heat,) and fell to it lustily; but he was deceived, for having put one end in his mouth, he could neither get it out again, nor bite it off, so that he stamped out for help.

His master, hearing him, came, and finding him in that manner, took hold of the other end of the pudding, and led him to the hall, and shewed him to all the scholars, saying, "See here, my good friends, and fellow-students, what a devout man my servant Miles is: he loveth not to break a fast day, witness this pudding, that his conscience will not let him swallow. I will have him to be an example to you all." Then tied he him to the window by the end of the pudding; where poor Miles stood like a bear tied by the nose to a stake, and endured many flouts and mocks. At night, his master released him from his penance; Miles was glad of it, and did vow never to break more fast days, while that he lived.

CHAPTER IV.

How Friar Bacon made a Brazen Head to speak, by the which he would have walled England about with Brass.

FRIAR BACON, reading one day of the many conquests of England, bethought himself how he might keep it hereafter from the like conquests; and so might make himself famous hereafter, to all posterities. This (after great study) he found could be no way so well done as one; which was, to make a head of brass, and if he could make this head to speak (and hear it when it spake), then might he be able to wall all England about with brass.

To this purpose he got one Friar Bungay to assist him, who was a great scholar, and a magician, but not to be compared to Friar Bacon. These two, with great study and pains, so framed a head of brass, that in the inward parts thereof there were all things like as in a natural man's head. This being done, they were as far from perfection of the work as they were before; for they knew not how to give those parts that they had made, motion; without which, it was impossible that it should speak.

Many books they read, but yet could not find out any hope of what they sought; at last, they concluded to raise a spirit, and to know of him that which they could not attain to by their own studies.

To do this, they prepared all things ready, and went one evening to a wood thereby; and, after many

ceremonies used, they spake the words of conjuration, which the Spirits straight obeyed, appearing unto them, and asking what they would.

"Know," said Friar Bacon, "that we have made an artificial head of brass, which we would have to speak; to the furtherance of which we have raised thee; and having raised, we will here keep thee, unless thou tell to us, the way and manner, how to make this head to speak." The Demon told him that he had not that power of himself. "Beginner of lies," said Friar Bacon, "I know that thou dost dissemble; and, therefore, tell it us quickly, or else we will here bind thee, to remain during our pleasure."

At these threatenings the Demon consented to do it, and told them, that with a continual fume of the six hottest simples, it should have motion; and in one month's space, speak. The time of the month or day he knew not; also he told them, that if they heard it not, before it had done speaking, all their labour should be lost. They being satisfied, licensed the spirit to depart.

Then went these two learned friars home again, and prepared the simples ready, and made the fume, and with continued watching attended when this Brazen Head would speak. Thus watched they for three weeks, without any rest, so that they were so weary, and sleepy, that they could not any longer refrain from rest. Then called Friar Bacon his man, Miles, and told him, "that it was not unknown what pains Friar Bungay and himself had taken, for three weeks' space, only to make, and to hear, the Brazen Head speak; which if they did

not, then had they lost all their labour, and all England had a great loss thereby; therefore, he entreated Miles, that he would watch, whilst that they slept, and call them, if the head spake."

"Fear not, good master," said Miles, "I will not sleep; but hearken and attend upon the head; and if it do chance to speak, I will call you; therefore, I pray, take you both your rest, and let me alone for watching this head."

After Friar Bacon had given him a great charge the second time, Friar Bungay and he went to sleep, and left Miles alone to watch the Brazen Head. Miles, to keep him from sleeping, got a tabor and pipe, and being merry disposed, with his own music and songs, kept himself from sleeping. At last, after some noise, the head spake these two words, "*Time is!*" Miles, hearing it speak no more, thought his master would be angry, if he waked him for that; and, therefore, he let them both sleep; and began to mock the head in this manner: "Thou brazen-faced head, hath my master took all this pains about thee, and now dost thou requite him with two words? *Time is!* I know *Time is*, and that you shall hear, goodman Brazen-face.

"Time is for some to eat;
Time is for some to sleep;
Time is for some to laugh;
Time is for some to weep."

After half an hour had passed, the head did speak again, two words, which were these, "*Time was!*" Miles

respected these words as little as he did the former, and would not wake them, but still scoffed at the Brazen Head, that it had learned no better words, and yet had such a tutor as his master; and in scorn of it, sung this song.

"Time was when thou, a kettle,
Wert filled with better matter,
But Friar Bacon did thee spoil,
When he thy sides did batter.

"*Time was!* I know that, Brazen-face, without your telling, I know *Time was;* and I know what things there were when time was; and if you speak no wiser, no master shall be waked for me."

Thus Miles talked and sung, till another half-hour was gone; then the Brazen Head spoke again these words, "*Time is past!*" and, therewith, fell down, and presently followed a terrible noise, with strange flashes of fire; so that Miles was half dead with fear. At this noise, the two Friars awaked; and wondered to see the whole room so full of smoke: but that being vanished, they might perceive the Brazen Head broken, and lying on the ground. At this sight they grieved, and called Miles, to know how this came.

Miles, half dead with fear, said that it fell down of itself; and that with the noise and fire that followed he was almost frighted out of his wits. Friar Bacon asked him, if he did not speak? "Yes," quoth Miles, "he spake, but to no purpose; I'll have a parrot speak better in that time, that you have been teaching this Brazen Head." "Out on thee, villain!" said Friar

Bacon, "thou hast undone us both. Hadst thou but called us, when it did speak, all England had been walled round about with brass, to its glory, and our eternal fames!"

"What were the words it spake?" "Very few," said Miles, "and those were none of the wisest that I have heard neither. First, he said, *Time is.*" "Hadst thou called us then," said Friar Bacon, "we had been made for ever." "Then," said Miles, "half an hour after it spake again, and said, *Time was.*" "And wouldst thou not call us then?" said Bungay. "Alas," said Miles, "I thought he would have told me some long tale; and then I purposed to have called you. Then, half an hour after, he cried, *Time is past!* and made such a noise, that he hath waked you himself, methinks." At this, Friar Bacon was in such a rage, that he would have beaten his man; but he was restrained by Bungay; but, nevertheless, for his punishment, he, with his art, struck him dumb for one whole month's space.

Thus, the great work of these learned Friars was overthrown, to their great griefs, by this simple fellow.

CHAPTER V.

How Friar Bacon overcame the German conjurer Vandermast; and made a spirit of his own carry him into Germany.

THE King of France, having sent an ambassador to the King of England, to entreat a peace between

them; and this ambassador being come to the King, he feasted him, as it is the manner of princes to do, and with the best sports that he had then, welcomed him. The ambassador, seeing the King of England so free in his love, desired, likewise, to give him some taste of his good liking: and to that intent, sent for one of his fellows, (being a German, and named Vandermast), a famous conjurer; who, being come, he told the King, "That since his Grace had been so bountiful in his love to him, he would shew him, by a servant of his, such wonderful things, that his Grace had never seen the like before."

The King demanded of him, "Of what nature those things were, that he would do?" The ambassador answered, "That they were things done by the art of magic." The King, hearing of this, sent straight for Friar Bacon; who presently came, and brought Friar Bungay with him.

When the banquet was done, Vandermast did ask the King, "If he desired to see the spirit of any man deceased; and if he did, he would raise him in such manner, and fashion, as he was in when that he lived." The King told him, "That above all men, he desired to see Pompey the Great; who could abide no equal." Vandermast, by his art, raised him, armed in such manner, as he was when he was slain at the battle of Pharsalia. At this, they were all highly contented. Friar Bacon presently raised the ghost of Julius Cæsar; who could abide no superior, and had slain this Pompey at the battle of Pharsalia. At the sight of him they were all amazed, but the King who sent for Bacon. And Van-

dermast said, "That there was some man of art, in that presence, whom he desired to see."

Friar Bacon then shewed himself, saying, "It was I, Vandermast, that raised Cæsar, partly to give content to this royal presence; but, chiefly, to conquer thy Pompey as he did once before, at that great battle of Pharsalia, which he now again shall do." Then, presently began a fight between Cæsar and Pompey, which continued a good space, to the content of all, except Vandermast. At last, Pompey was overcome, and slain by Cæsar: then vanished they both away.

"My Lord Ambassador," said the King, "methinks that my Englishman has put down your German. Hath he no better cunning than this?" "Yes," answered Vandermast, "your Grace shall see me put down your Englishman, ere that you go from hence; and, therefore, Friar, prepare thyself with thy best of art to withstand me." "Alas!" said Friar Bacon, "it is a little thing will serve to resist thee in this kind. I have here one that is my inferior, (shewing him Friar Bungay) try thy art with him; and if thou do put him to the worst, then will I deal with thee; but not till then." Friar Bungay then began to shew his art; and after some turning and looking in his book, he brought up among them the Hesperian tree, which did bear golden apples; these apples were kept by a waking dragon, that lay under the tree. He, having done this, bade Vandermast find one that durst gather the fruit. Then Vandermast did raise the ghost of Hercules, in his habit that he wore when he was living; and with his club on his shoulder. "Here

is one," said Vandermast, "that shall gather fruit from this tree: this is Hercules, that in his lifetime gathered of this fruit, and made the dragon crouch: and now again shall he gather it in spite of opposition." As Hercules was going to pluck the fruit, Friar Bacon held up his wand; at which, Hercules stayed, and seemed fearful. Vandermast bade him for to gather of the fruit, or else he would torment him. Hercules was more fearful, and said, "I cannot, nor I dare not; for great Bacon stands, whose charms are far more powerful than thine; I must obey him, Vandermast." Hereat, Vandermast cursed Hercules, and threatened him: but Friar Bacon laughed; and bade him not to chafe himself, ere that his journey was ended. "For seeing," said he, "that Hercules will do nothing at your command; I will have him do you some service, at mine." With that, he bade Hercules carry him home into Germany.

The spirit obeyed him, and took Vandermast on his back, and went away with him in all their sights. "Hold, Friar," cried the ambassador, "I will not lose Vandermast for half my land!"

"Content yourself, my Lord," answered Friar Bacon, "I have but sent him home to see his wife; and ere long he may return." The King of England thanked Friar Bacon, and forced some gifts on him for his services that he had done for him: for Friar Bacon did so little respect money, that he never would take any of the King.

CHAPTER VI.

How Friar Bacon burned his books of Magic, and gave himself to the Study of Divinity only; and how he turned Anchorite.

AFTER some years, Friar Bacon keeping his chamber, fell into divers meditations, on the vanity of arts and sciences; and crying out upon himself for neglecting the study of divinity, and for studying magic; and sometimes meditating on the shortness of man's life, condemned himself for spending a time so short, so ill as he had done his; in all condemning his former studies.

And that the world should know how truly he did repent his former life, he caused to be made a great fire, and sending for many of his friends, scholars, and others, said, "I have found that my knowledge has been a heavy burden, and has kept down my good thoughts. But I will remove the cause, which are these books; which I do purpose, here, before you all, to burn."

They all entreated him to spare the books, because in them there were many things, that after ages might receive great benefit by. He would not hearken unto them; but threw them all into the fire: and, in that fire, burnt the greatest learning in the world.

Then did he dispose of all his goods. Some part he gave to poor scholars; and some he gave to other poor folks. Nothing left he for himself.

Then caused he to be made, in the Church wall, a cell, where he locked himself in ; and there remained till his death. His time he spent in prayer, meditation, and such divine exercises ; and did seek, by all means, to dissuade men from the study of magic. Thus lived he, some two years' space, in that cell, never coming forth. His meat and drink he received in at a window ; and at that window did he discourse with those that came to him. His grave he digged with his own nails ; and was laid there when he died.

Thus was the life and death of this famous Friar, who lived most part of his life a magician, and died a true penitent sinner, and Anchorite.

A TRUE TALE OF ROBIN HOOD.

WITH AN ILLUSTRATION BY FREDERICK TAYLER.

CHAPMAN AND HALL, LONDON.



ROBIN HOOD.

A TRUE TALE OF ROBIN HOOD.

BOTH gentlemen and yeomen bold,
Or whatsoe'er you are,
To have a stately story told,
Attention now prepare:

It is a tale of Robin Hood,
Which I to you will tell;
Which being rightly understood,
I know will please you well.

This Robin (so much talked on)
Was once a man of fame,
And styled Earl of Huntingdon,
Lord Robin Hood by name.

In courtship and magnificence
His carriage won him praise;
And greater favour with his prince
Than any in our days.

In bounteous liberality
He too much did excel;
And loved men of quality
More than exceeding well.

His great revenues all he sold,
For wine and costly cheer;
He kept three hundred bowmen bold,
He shooting loved so dear.

At last, by his profuse expense,
He had consumed his wealth;
And, being outlaw'd by his prince,
In woods he lived by stealth.

So being outlaw'd (as 'tis told)
He with a crew went forth
Of lusty cutters stout and bold,
And robbed in the North.

Among the rest, one Little John,
A yeoman bold and free;
Who could (if it stood him upon)
With ease encounter three.

One hundred men in all he got,
With whom (the story says)
Three hundred common men durst not
Hold combat any ways.

They Yorkshire woods frequented much,
And Lancashire also;
Wherein their practices were such
That they wrought muckle woe.

None rich durst travel to and fro,
Though ne'er so strongly arm'd;
But by these thieves (so strong in show)
They still were robb'd and harm'd.

But Robin Hood so gentle was,
And bore so brave a mind;
If any in distress did pass,
To them he was so kind,

That he would give and lend to them,
To help them in their need;
This made all poor men pray for him,
And wish he well might speed.

The widow and the fatherless
He would send means unto;
And those whom famine did oppress
Found him a friendly foe.

Nor would he do a woman wrong,
But see her safe conveyed;
He would protect with power strong
All those who craved his aid.

The Abbot of Saint Mary's then,
Who him once harmed before,
Was riding with two hundred men,
With gold and silver store.

But Robin Hood upon him set
With his courageous sparks,
And all his coin, perforce, did get,
Which was twelve thousand marks.

He bound the Abbot to a tree,
And would not let him pass,
Before that to his men and he
His Lordship had said Mass.

Which being done, upon his horse
He set him fast astride;
And with his face towards his tail,
He forced him to ride.

Thus Robin Hood did vindicate
His former wrongs received;
For 'twas this covetous prelate
Him of his land bereaved.

The Abbot he rode to the King,
With all the haste he could;
And to his grace he every thing
Exactly did unfold.

He said that if no course were ta'en,
By force or stratagem,
To take this rebel and his train,
No man should pass for them.

The King protested, by and by,
Unto the Abbot then,
That Robin Hood with speed should die,
With all his merry men.

And promised, who, alive or dead,
Could bring bold Robin Hood,
Should have one thousand marks well paid,
In gold and silver good.

This promise of the King did make
Full many a yeoman bold
Attempt stout Robin Hood to take,
With all the force they could.

But still when any came to him,
Within the gay green wood;
He entertainment gave to them,
With venison fat and good.

And showed to them such martial sport
With his long bow and arrow,
That they of him did give report,
How that it was great sorrow,

That such a worthy man as he
Should thus be put to shift;
Being late a lord of high degree,
Of living quite bereft.

The King, to take him, more and more,
Sent men of mickle might;
But he and his still beat them sore,
And conquer'd them in fight.

Or else, with love and courtesy,
To him he won their hearts;
Thus still he lived by robbery,
Throughout the northern parts.

And all the country stood in dread
Of Robin and his men;
For stouter lads ne'er lived by bread,
In those days, nor since then.

The Abbot which before I named
Sought all the means he could,
To have, by force, this rebel ta'en,
And his adherents bold.

Therefore, he arm'd five hundred men,
With furniture complete;
But the outlaws slew one half of them,
And made the rest retreat.

The long bow and the arrow keen,
They were so used unto,
That still he kept the forest green,
In spite o' th' proudest foe.

Twelve of the Abbot's men he took,
Who came him to have ta'en:
When all the rest the field forsook,
These he did entertain,

With banqueting and merriment,
And having used them well,
He to their lord them safely sent,
And will'd them him to tell:

That if he would be pleased at last,
To beg of our good King,
That he might pardon what was past,
And him to favour bring,

He would surrender back again,
The money which before
Was taken by him and his men,
From him and many more.

King Richard, of that name the First,
Surnamed Cœur de Lion;
Went to defeat the Pagans curst,
Who kept the coasts of Sion.

The Bishop of Ely, chancellor,
Was left a viceroy here;
Who like a potent emperor
Did proudly domineer.

Our chronicles of him report,
That commonly he rode
With a thousand horse from court to court,
Where he would make abode.

He, riding down towards the North,
With his aforesaid train;
Robin and his men did issue forth,
Them all to entertain;

And with the gallant gray-goose wing
They show'd to them such play,
That made their horses kick and fling,
And down their riders lay.

Full glad and fain the Bishop was,
For all his thousand men,
To seek what means he could to pass
From out of Robin's ken.

Two hundred of his men were kill'd
And fourscore horses good,
Thirty, who did as captives yield,
Carried to the green wood;

Which afterwards were ransomed,
For twenty marks a man;
The rest set spurs to horse and fled
To the town of Warrington.

The Bishop, sore enraged, then
Did, in King Richard's name,
Muster a power of northern men,
These outlaws bold to tame.

But Robin, with his courtesy,
So won the meaner sort,
That they were loath on him to try
What rigour did import.

So that bold Robin and his train
Did live unhurt of them,
Until King Richard came again
From fair Jerusalem.

And then the talk of Robin Hood
His royal ears did fill,
His grace admired that i' th' greenwood
He was continued still.

So that the country far and near
Did give him great applause;
For none of them need stand in fear,
But such as broke the laws.

He wished well unto the King
And prayed still for his health,
And never practised any thing
Against the commonwealth.

With wealth that he by roguery got,
Eight alms-houses he built;
Thinking thereby to purge the blot,
Of blood which he had spilt.

Such was their blind devotion then,
Depending on their works;
Which if 'twere true, we Christian men
Inferior were to Turks.

The King in person, with some Lords,
To Nottingham did ride,
To try what strength and skill affords,
To crush this outlaw's pride.

And as he once before had done,
He did again proclaim,
That whosoever would take upon
To bring to Nottingham,

Or any place within the land
Rebellious Robin Hood,
Should be preferr'd in place to stand
With those of noble blood.

When Robin Hood heard of the same,
Within a little space,
Into the town of Nottingham
A letter to his grace,

He shot upon an arrow head,
One evening cunningly,
Which was brought to the King and read
Before his majesty.

The tenor of this letter was,
That Robin would submit,
And be true liegeman to his grace
In any thing that's fit;

So that his highness would forgive
Him and his merry men all;
If not, he must i' th' greenwood live,
And take what chance did fall.

The King would fain have pardon'd him,
But that some lords did say,
This precedent will much condemn
Your grace another day.

While that the King and Lords did stay
Debating on this thing,
Some of these outlaws fled away
Unto the Scottish King.

Of more than full a hundred men,
But forty tarried still,
Who were resolved to stick to him,
Let Fortune work her will.

If none had fled, all for his sake,
Had got their pardon free!
The King to favour meant to take
His merry men and he.

But ere the pardon to him came,
This famous archer died:
His death and manner of the same
I'll presently describe.

For being vexed to think upon
His followers' revolt,
In melancholy passion
He did recount his faults.

Perfidious traitors! said he then,
In all our dangers past,
Have I you guarded as my men,
To leave me thus at last?

This sad perplexity did cause
A fever, as some say;
Which him unto confusion draws,
Though by a stranger way.

This deadly danger to prevent,
He hied with all speed
Unto a nunnery, with intent
For his health's sake to bleed.

A faithless friar did pretend
In love to let him blood;
But he by falsehood wrought the end
Of famous Robin Hood.

The friar, as some say, did this,
To vindicate the wrong
Which to the clergy he and his
Had done by power strong.

Thus died he by treachery,
That could not die by force;
Had he lived longer, certainly
King Richard in remorse

Had unto favour him received,
His brave men elevated;
Pity he was of life bereaved
By one which he so hated!

His corpse, the prioress of the place
The next day that he died,
Caused to be buried in mean case,
Close by the highway side;

And over him she caused a stone
To be fixt on the ground;
An epitaph was set thereon,
Wherein his name was found.

The date o' th' year and day also,
She made to be set there;
That all who by the way did go
Might see it plain appear,

That such a man as Robin Hood
Was buried in that place;
And how he lived in the green wood
And robbed for a space.

This woman, though she did him hate,
Yet loved his memory,
And thought it wondrous pity that
His fame should with him die.

This epitaph, as records tell,
Within this hundred years,
By many was discerned well;
But time all things out-wears.

His followers, when he was dead,
Were some reprieved to grace;
The rest to foreign countries fled,
And left their native place.

Although his funeral was but mean,
This woman had in mind,
Lest his fame should be buried clean
From those that came behind.

For certainly, before nor since,
No man e'er understood,
Under the reign of any Prince,
Of one like Robin Hood.

No warring guns were then in use,
They dreamt of no such thing;
Our Englishmen in fight did use
The gallant gray-goose wing;

In which activity these men
Through practice were so good;
That in those days none equall'd them,
Especially Robin Hood.

So that it seems keeping in caves,
In woods and forests thick,
They'd beat a multitude with staves,
Their arrows did so prick.

And none durst near unto them come,
Unless in courtesy;
All such he bravely would send home
With mirth and jollity.

Which courtesy won him such love,
As I before have told,
It was the chief cause that he did prove
More prosperous than he could.

Let us be thankful for these times
Of plenty, truth, and peace;
And leave out great and horrid crimes,
Lest they cause this to cease.

I know there's many feigned tales
Of Robin Hood and 's crew;
But chronicle, which seldom fails,
Reports this to be true.

If any reader please to try,
As I direction show,
The truth of this brave history,
He 'll find it true, I know.

And I shall think my labour well
Bestow'd to purpose good
When 't shall be said, that I did tell
True tales of Robin Hood.

A MERRY TALE OF

THE KING AND THE COBBLER.

WITH AN ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN ABSOLON.

CHAPMAN AND HALL, LONDON.

A MERRY TALE OF THE KING AND THE COBBLER.

CHAPTER I.

Of King Henry the Eighth's method of visiting the City Watch; and of his becoming acquainted with a merry Cobbler.

IT was the custom of King Henry the Eighth to walk late in the night into the city, disguised, to observe how the constables and watch performed their duty, not only in guarding the city gates, but also in diligently watching the inner part of the city, that they might prevent those damages and casualties that often happen to great and populous cities in the night time. This he did oftentimes, without its being discovered who he was, returning home to Whitehall early in the morning. Now, in returning home through the Strand, he took notice of a certain Cobbler, who was always up at work, whistling and singing every morning. So resolving to see him, he knocks off the heel of his shoe by hitting it against the stones. Having

so done, he bounced against the stall. "Who is there?" cries the Cobbler, opening his stall door, whereupon the King asked him "If he could fit on his heel?" "Yes, that I can," says the Cobbler; "so sit thee down, and I will do it straight." The Cobbler laid his awls and old shoes aside, to make room for the King to sit by him, who was hardly able to forbear laughing at the Cobbler's kindness, and asked him if there was not a house near where they sold a cup of good ale and the people up. "Yes," said the Cobbler, "there is an inn over the way, where I think the folks are up, for the carriers go from them early every morning." With that the King borrowed an old shoe of the Cobbler, and went over to the inn, desiring him to bring his shoe over thither when he had done it. The Cobbler promised him that he would.

So making as much haste as he could, he carried it over to the King, saying, "Honest blade, here is thy shoe again: I'll warrant thee, it will not come off again in haste." "Very well," said the King, "what must you have for your pains?" "A couple of pence," said the Cobbler. "Well," said the King, "as thou art an honest, merry fellow, here is a tester for you; come, sit down by me, and I will drink to thee. Here is a good health to the King!" "With all my heart," said the Cobbler; "I will pledge thee, were it in water."

So the Cobbler sate down by the King, was very merry, and drank his liquor freely. He also sung some of his pretty songs and catches, at which the King laughed heartily, and was very pleasant and jocund with the Cobbler, telling him withal, that his name was Harry Tudor, and that he belonged to the court; and if he would come and see him there, he would make him very welcome, because he was such a merry companion; and charged him to come, and not forget his name: and to ask any one for him about the court, and they would bring him to him. "For," said the King, "I am well known there."

Now, the Cobbler little dreamed that it was the King that spoke to him, much less that the King's name was Harry Tudor. Then, with a great deal of confidence, he stands up, and pulls off his hat, and makes the King many thanks, telling him that he was one of the honestest fellows he had ever met with in all his lifetime; and though he had never been at court, yet it should not be long before he would make a holiday to come and see him. Whereupon the King, discharging the reckoning, would have taken leave of the Cobbler; but he, taking him by the hand, said, "By my faith! you shall not go yet; you shall first go and see my poor habitation. I have there a tub of good brown ale, never tapped yet, and you must needs go and taste it; for thou art the honestest blade

I ever met with; and I love an honest, merry companion with all my heart."

CHAPTER II.

The Cobbler entertains the King in the Cellar; and of the disturbance made by the Cobbler's Wife.

SO the Cobbler took the King with him, over the way, where he had a cellar joining to his stall; which was handsomely furnished for a man of his profession. Into this cellar he had the King. "There," said he, "sit you down; you are welcome. But I must desire you to speak softly, for fear of waking my wife, Joan, who lies hard by;" showing the King a close bed, neatly made up in one corner of the cellar, much like a closet; "for if she awake, she will certainly make both our ears ring again."

At this speech of the Cobbler the King laughed, and told him, "he would be mindful to follow his directions." So the Cobbler kindled a fire, and fetched out a brown loaf, from which he cut a lusty slice, and set it baking by the fire; then he brought out his Cheshire cheese.

"Come," said he, "will you eat any cheese? there is as good fellowship in eating as in drinking." This made the King admire the freedom of the Cobbler. So having eaten a piece, "Here's a health to all true hearts and merry companions," says the Cobbler. At which the King smiling, said, "God have mercy, old friend, I'll pledge thee."

In this manner they ate and drank together, until almost break of day; the Cobbler, being very free of his liquor, and pleasing the King with several of his old stories. When, on a sudden, the Cobbler's old wife, Joan, began to awake. "In faith," says the Cobbler, "you must begone now: my wife, Joan, begins to grumble, she will wake presently; and I would not, for all the shoes in my shop, she should find you here." So taking the King up stairs, he says, "Farewell, honest blade; it shall not be long before I make a holiday, to come and see thee at court." The King replied, "You shall be kindly welcome." So they parted; the King on his way to Whitehall, and the Cobbler to his cellar, putting all things to rights before his wife, Joan, got up; and went to work again, whistling and singing, as merry as he used to do; being much satisfied that he had happened on such a good companion, and very much delighted at thinking how merry he should be when he came to the court.

CHAPTER III.

The Cobbler's preparation to go to Court; and the pains his Wife took to set him off to the best advantage.

AS soon as the King came home, he gave his orders to all about the court, that if any one inquired for him, by the name of Harry Tudor, the person should be brought before him, without further examination. Now, the Cobbler thought every day a month, until he had been at court to see his new acquaintance; and he was much troubled how he should get leave of his wife, Joan; for he could not go without her knowledge, by reason, he resolved to make himself as fine as ever he could, and as his wife, Joan, always kept his holiday clothes.

So, one evening, as they sate at supper, she being in a good humour, he began to lay open his mind to her, and showed her the manner of the acquaintance; repeating it, over and over again, that he was the honestest man he had ever met with. "Husband," said she, "because you have been so generous to tell me the truth, I will give you leave to make a holiday. You shall go to court as fine as I can make you." So it being agreed, that he might go the next day,

Joan arose by times the next morning, to brush her husband's clothes; and to make him look as snug as might be, she washed and ironed his laced band, and made his shoes so shine, that he might see his face in them. Having done this, she made her husband arise, washed him well with warm water, put him on a clean shirt; and afterwards dressed him in his best clothes, and pinned his laced band in print.

CHAPTER IV.

The Cobbler's reception at Court; with the manner of his behaviour before the King.

THE Cobbler, being thus equipped, strutted through the streets, like a crow in a gutter; thinking himself as fine as the best of them all. In this manner came he to court; staring at this body, and on that body, as he walked up and down, and knowing no one to ask for but Harry Tudor. At last he espied one, as he thought, in the habit of a serving man, to whom he made his addresses, saying, "Do you hear, honest fellow, do you know one Harry

Tudor, who belongs to the court?" "Yes," said the man; "follow me, and I will take you to him." With that, he took him presently up into the guard-chamber, telling one of the yeomen of the guard, there was one that inquired for Harry Tudor. The yeoman replied, "I know him very well; and if you please to go along with me, I will bring you to him immediately."

The Cobbler followed the yeoman, admiring the finery of the rooms he went through; and thinking within himself, that the yeoman was not very unlike the person he inquired after. "Him whom I look after," said he, "is a plain, merry, and honest fellow: his name is Harry Tudor; we drank several pots together not long since: I suppose he may be some fine lord or other about the court." "I tell you, friend," replied the yeoman, "I do know him very well; do but follow me, and I will bring you to him straight."

So going forward, he came to the room where the King was, accompanied with many of his nobles. As soon as the yeoman had put by the arras, he spake aloud, saying, "May it please your Majesty, here is one inquires for Harry Tudor." The Cobbler, hearing this, thought he had committed no less than treason; therefore he up with his heels, and ran away for it. But not being acquainted with the

several turnings and rooms through which he came, he was soon overtaken, and brought before the King; whom the Cobbler very little thought to be the person he inquired after.

He therefore fell on his knees, saying, "May it please your Grace, I am a poor Cobbler, and inquired for one Harry Tudor, who is a very honest fellow. I mended the heel of his shoe not long ago, for which he paid me nobly, and gave me two pots to boot; but I had him afterwards to my own cellar, where we drank a cup of nappy ale, and were very merry; till my wife, Joan, began to wake, which put an end to our merriment for that time. But I told him, that I surely would be at court to see him, as soon as I conveniently could." "Well," said the King, "rise up, and be not afraid! look well about you, peradventure you may find the fellow in this company." So the Cobbler arose, and looked wistfully upon the King and his nobles, but to no purpose; for, although he thought he saw something in the King's face which he had seen before, yet he could not imagine him to be Harry Tudor, the heel of whose shoe he had mended, and who had been so merry with him, both at the inn and in his own cellar.

He therefore told the King, "he did not expect to find Harry Tudor among such fine folks as he saw there; but the person that he looked for was a plain,

honest, true-hearted fellow;" adding withal, "that he was sure, if Harry Tudor did but know that he was come to court, he would make him welcome." At which speech of the Cobbler the King had much ado to forbear laughing outright; but keeping his countenance as well as he could, he said to the yeoman of the guard, "Here, take this honest Cobbler down into the cellar, and let him drink my health. I will give orders that Harry Tudor come to him presently."

So away went the Cobbler, ready to leap out of his skin for joy, not only that he was got so clear off, but, also, that he should find his friend, Harry Tudor.

CHAPTER V.

The Cobbler's entertainment at the King's cellar; where he meets his old friend, Harry Tudor.

THE Cobbler had not been long in the cellar before the King came to him, in the same habit he had on when the Cobbler mended his shoe; whereupon the Cobbler knew him, and ran and kissed him, saying, "Honest Harry, I have made a holiday on purpose to come and see you; but I had much ado to get

leave of my wife, Joan, who was loath I should lose so much time from my work; but I was resolved to see you, so I made myself as fine as I could. But I'll tell you, Harry, when I came to court I was in a peck of troubles how to find you out; but at last I met with a man who told me, he knew you very well, and that he would bring me to you; but, instead of doing so, he brought me before the King, which had almost frighted me to death. But in good faith," continues the Cobbler, "I am resolved to be merry with you, since I have the good fortune to find you at last."

"Ay, so you shall," replied the King, "we will be as merry as princes." With that he called for a large glass of wine, and drank to the Cobbler, "The King's good health." "God have mercy," says the Cobbler, "honest Harry, I will pledge thee with all my heart." Now, after the Cobbler had drunk about four or five good healths, he began to be merry, and fell to singing his old songs and catches; the which pleased the King very much, and made him laugh most heartily: when, on a sudden, many of the nobles came into the cellar, extraordinarily rich in apparel, who stood bare to Harry Tudor; which put the Cobbler in great amazement at first; but, recovering himself, and looking more earnestly upon Harry Tudor, he presently knew him to be the King, that he had seen in the Presence Chamber.

He, therefore, immediately fell upon his knees, saying, "May it please your Highness, I am an honest Cobbler, and mean no harm." "No, no," said the King, "nor shall receive none here." He commanded him, therefore, to rise up and be as merry as he was before; and, though he knew him to be the King, he should use the same freedom with him as he did when he mended his shoe. This kind speech of the King, and three or four glasses of wine more, made the Cobbler be in as good humour as he was before, telling the King many of his pretty stories, and singing more songs, very much to the satisfaction of the King and his nobles. And among others, he sang this one to the tune of Jenny Gin.

Come, let us drink the other pot,
Our sorrows to confound;
We'll laugh and sing before the King,
So let his health go round.

For I'm as bold as bold can be,
No Cobbler e'er was ruder;
So then, good fellow, here's to thee,
Remembering Harry Tudor.

When I'm at work within my stall,
Upon him I shall think;
His kindness I to mind shall call,
Whene'er I eat or drink.

His kindness to me was so great,
The like was never known;
His kindness I will still repeat,
And so shall my wife Joan.

I'll laugh, when I sit in my stall,
And merrily will sing,
That I, with my poor last and awl,
Was fellow with a King.

But it is more I must confess,
Than I at first did know;
But Harry Tudor, ne'ertheless,
Resolves it must be so.

And now farewell unto Whitehall,
I homewards must retire;
To whistle and sing within my stall,
My Joan will me require.

I can but think how she will laugh,
When she hears of this thing;
How he who drank her nut-brown ale,
Was England's royal King.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the Cobbler's becoming a Courtier.

NOW the King, considering the pleasant humours of the Cobbler, how innocently merry he was, and free from any designs, and that he was a person that laboured very hard, and took a great deal of pains, for a small livelihood, was pleased, out of his princely grace and favour, to allow him a liberal annuity of forty marks a year for the better support of his jolly humours, and the maintenance of himself and his wife Joan; and that he should be admitted one of the courtiers, and have the freedom of his cellar whenever he pleased.

This being so much beyond his expectation, highly elevated the Cobbler's humours, much to the satisfaction of the King. So, after some legs and scrapes, he returned home to his wife Joan, with the joyful news of his kind reception at court; which so pleased her, that she did not think much of the pains she had been at in tricking him up for the journey.

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